

AgNews



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Nutrient Management Mandates Issued

The Nutrient Management Commission notified 1,380 property owners of a January 2007 nutrient management deadline. Those in receipt of the notice, and who apply fertilizer nutrients, will need to develop and implement a nutrient management plan, maintain records, and submit an annual report to the Delaware Nutrient Management Commission.

The Delaware Nutrient Management Law, enacted in 1999, requires that the Commission phase in requirements starting in 2003 and ending in 2007. The law requires farm operations, golf courses, and other nutrient handlers to become certified and implement nutrient management practices. Bill Rohrer, Program Administrator, says "The law was phased in over a five year period so we did not exhaust our resources in developing nutrient management plans and establishing alternatives for excess poultry litter. Furthermore, we have learned each year how to make the program run smoother. We would not have had this opportunity if the law was implemented in just one year."

Approximately 85% of Delaware farmers are under a Commission approved plan and are finding alternatives for excess manure. Rohrer said, "Alternatives for excess poultry litter have relocated about 80,000 tons a year for the past 2 years. Perdue AgriRecycle and the litter brokers have made this happen." Transportation funds are managed by the Commission and come with a price tag of over \$500,000 a year. Education is an important part of the requirements as over 2,000 different nutrient handlers are certified by the Commission.

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